

REMARKS

As an initial matter, Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for indicating allowable subject matter in claims 2-6 and 8. Applicants also thank the Examiner for approving the Drawings submitted October 2, 2003, acknowledging Applicants' claim for foreign priority and receipt of the priority document, and considering all of the documents cited in the Information Disclosure Statement filed on February 10, 2004.

Claims 1-11 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 2, 4 and 7 have been amended, and claims 9-11 have been newly added. Reconsideration of the rejection and allowance of the pending application in view of the following remarks are respectfully requested.

The present invention relates to a lens. The lens of the present invention includes, inter alia, a convex lens surface and a flange projecting in a radial direction from the convex surface. The flange is provided with a groove that radially extends from the convex surface to the outer edge of the flange. The groove allows the removal of excess coating solution applied to the lens.

In the Office Action of November 30, 2004, the Examiner rejected claims 1 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Ichikawa et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,246,634). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection for at least the following reasons.

Ichikawa relates to a lens blank. Ichikawa's lens blank 10 includes an annular

flange portion 14 surrounding the outer periphery of a convex portion 12, and an annular groove 17 formed in the flange portion. See Figure 1B and col. 7, lines 26-34.

Unlike Ichikawa, the lens of Applicants' present invention includes a groove that extends in a radial, rather than an annular, direction. Furthermore, Applicants' groove extends all the way to the outer edge of the flange, whereas Ichikawa's annular groove 17 extends only to the inner edge of a continuous thick portion 16. See Figure 1B and col. 7, lines 30-34. Thus, upon applying a coating solution to Ichikawa's lens blank, excess coating solution will puddle up in the annular groove 17. Unlike Ichikawa, Applicants' lens advantageously avoids the change in refractive power of the lens that would be caused by the puddling of coating solution, since Applicants' groove allows excess coating solution to drip off of the lens.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Ichikawa fails to disclose a lens comprising a flange provided with a groove radially extending from a convex surface to the outer edge of the flange, as recited in claim 1. For at least this reason, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claim 1 is improper, and request withdrawal of the rejection. Dependent claims 2-9 are also submitted to be in condition for allowance at least in view of their dependence on claim 1.

Dependent claim 9 is also submitted to be in condition for allowance for the additional reason that Ichikawa fails to disclose a groove configured for allowing the removal of excess coating solution applied to the lens.

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In the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that claims 2-6 and 8 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 2 and 8 have been rewritten in independent form as newly added claims 10 and 11. For at least this reason, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 10 and 11 are allowable as well.

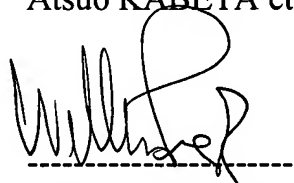
Based on the above, it is respectfully submitted that this application is now in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Entry and consideration of the present amendment, reconsideration of the outstanding Office Action, and allowance of the present application and all of the claims therein are respectfully requested and now believed to be appropriate. Applicant has made a sincere effort to place the present invention in condition for allowance and believes that he has now done so.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments regarding this response, or the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,  
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